

Women, Parenting, and Trauma in the Criminal Justice System

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Characteristics of Women Offenders

- Disproportionately women of color
- In their early to mid-thirties
- Most likely to have been convicted of drug or drug-related offense
- Fragmented family histories with other family members in the CJ system
- Survivors of physical and/or sexual abuse

Source: Covington, 2004

- **Significant substance abuse problems**
- **Multiple physical & mental health problems**
- **Unmarried mothers of minor children**
- **High school degree/GED**
- **Limited vocational training**
- **Sporadic work histories**

Source: Covington, 2004

The Impact of Trauma on Mental Health

- Eighty-one percent of adults diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder and 90% diagnosed with dissociative disorder were sexually and/or physically abused as children
- Ninety-seven percent of homeless women who have a mental illness have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse. Eighty-seven percent experienced this abuse both as children and as adults
- Most self-injurers have a history of childhood physical or sexual abuse

Adults who were abused during childhood are:

- more than twice as likely to have at least one lifetime psychiatric diagnosis
- almost three times as likely to have an affective disorder
- almost three times as likely to have an anxiety disorder
- almost 2 ½ times as likely to have phobias
- more than 10 times as likely to have a panic disorder
- almost 4 times as likely to have an antisocial personality disorder

Definition of Trauma

The DSM IV-TR defines trauma as, "involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity; or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate. The person's response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness or horror (or in children, the response must involve disorganized or agitated behavior)."

(American Psychiatric Assoc. [APA] 2000, pg. 463).

Why Treat the Trauma?

- Trauma treatment is part of the continuum of care that aids an individual lead a productive life and reduces recidivism to jail, homelessness, and psychiatric facilities.

How Trauma Hurts

- Trauma affects people's:
 - Judgment (setting limits and boundaries)
 - Feelings
 - Beliefs (trust, safety, self-esteem)
 - Frame of Reference (identity, world view, spirituality)
 - Memory and Perceptions
 - Body and Mind

What does trauma do?

- Symptoms as adaptations of a trauma
 - Substance Use and Abuse
 - Learning Disorders
 - Attention Deficit
 - Mood Disorders
 - Anxiety Disorders
 - Self-destructive Behaviors (i.e. risky sexual behavior, self-harming, fighting, eating disorders)

When working with individuals with histories of trauma, it is important to provide trauma informed services.

Trauma-Informed Services

These are services that are provided for problems other than trauma but require knowledge about violence against women and the impact of trauma thereby increasing their effectiveness.

Source: Covington, 2004

Trauma Informed Services

1. Take the trauma into account.
2. Avoid triggering trauma reactions and/or traumatizing the individual.
3. Adjust the behavior of counselors, other staff and the organization to support the individual's coping capacity.
4. Allow survivors to manage their trauma symptoms successfully so that they are able to access, retain and benefit from the services.

Phoenix Project

- SAMHSA Jail Diversion Site 1997
- Served women with co-occurring disorders
- Pre and Post-booking diversion
- Mobile Crisis Unit
- Multi-Agency Partnership
- Located in Wicomico County

How we came to understand the need for Trauma Treatment

Conclusions and Impacts

- About 2/3 of women (68%) grew up in families in which one or both parents had active alcohol or substance abuse problems.
- About 24% grew up in families where one or both parents had a serious mental illness.
- Approximately 51% experienced childhood sexual abuse by a family member or someone outside the family prior to age 14.

Conclusions and Impacts - Continued

- About 43% experienced physical abuse by a family member prior to age 14.
- By age 14, 59% reported using alcohol and 44% had begun using marijuana,
- By age 17, 57% had become pregnant.
- By age 18, 74% had experienced their first indications of serious mental illness & 34% had made at least 1 suicide attempt.
- By age 18, 27% had been arrested at least 1 time

TAMAR PROGRAM

- SAMHSA Women and Violence Site
- Only site addressing the needs of incarcerated women
- Provides mental health, substance abuse, and trauma treatment for women in detention centers
- Began in 3 local detention centers
- Currently serving 13 sites

Tamar's Story

- In the Old Testament, Tamar was a daughter of King David. Tamar's half brother Amnon raped her. The author of II Samuel writes that afterwards she tore her clothes and went into her brother Absalom's house. She is not mentioned again. The Tamar's of today deserve better futures.

TAMAR stands for:

- Trauma
- Addictions
- Mental health
- And
- Recovery

Preparing for Implementation

- Trauma training for community agencies
- Trauma training for Correctional Officers and staff
- Correctional Cross-training for TAMAR clinical staff

TAMAR also includes extensive training for Correctional Staff:

- Understanding trauma
- Behaviors to look for
- Vicarious Traumatization
- Avoiding burnout
- Prevalence of abuse among inmates and probationers

Sustaining TAMAR

- Mental Hygiene Administration
- AIDS Administration
- Byrne Memorial Funding

Tamar's Children- Baltimore City

- Funded under SAMHSA "Build Mentally Healthy Communities" Grant
- Partnership with Baltimore City Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice
- Designed to serve pregnant and post-partum incarcerated women and their infants
- Provides holistic care

Components of Tamar's Children

- Multi-agency collaboration, chaired by Hugh Mighty, M.D., Chief of OB/GYN at UM,B
- Services designed to enhance the environmental, ecological, and institutional health & growth of mothers & infants
- Clinical intervention addressing the affectional bond between the mothers and their babies (Circle of Security)

Services in Facility

- Pregnant women move to off-site facility
- Receive mental health, substance abuse, & trauma treatment, parenting supports, case management, and pre & post-natal care
- Participate in the Circle of Security

Circle of Security Intervention

- Group Interventions
- Careful & repeated review of videotapes of mother's interaction with baby.
- Assists in establishing a secure base & attachment
- Increases mother's awareness of events/behaviors

Services in the Community

- Intensive case management to transition into community
- Entitlements
- Housing-HUD's Shelter Plus Care
- Mental health, substance abuse, & trauma treatment
- Peer support group
- Continue with Circle of Security

Funding Sources for Tamar's Children

- SAMHSA - Build Mentally Healthy Communities Grant
- HUD - Shelter Plus Care Grant
- Open Society Institute
- Abell Foundation
- GOCCP - RSAT Funds (DOJ)
- State- In-Kind services
- City- In-Kind services

TAMAR Community Project

- Funded by Ryan White Title II funds
- Provide services for HIV positive women with histories of trauma, prostitution, and involvement in the justice system.
- Located in Sandtown/Winchester
- Anticipated opening in July 2005

**MARTHA
STEWART**

Living

BEHIND BARS

jailhouse chili

cooking for a crowd

faux finishes

brighten up drab
cell blocks with color

cozy cots

decorating sheets

prison parties

sprucing up your cell
for those special
holiday occasions

good things

polishing handcuffs
and leg irons

laundry room

removing pesty blood
stains from prison garb

cellkeeping

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